

DRAFT

Rockville Environment Commission Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, October 4, 2012 Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue

Attendance

Commissioners Present: John Becker, Steve Cardon, Julie Palakovich Carr, Kris Dighe, Beri Kravitz, Devinie Lye, Clark Reed and Lea Rosenbohm

Commissioners Absent: Alicia Hosmer

Guests: Mark Pierzchala, Council Liaison
Mark Charles, Environmental Management
Lise Soukup, Environmental Management

Meeting Commencement

The meeting convened at 7:30 pm by Chair Dighe.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Palakovich Carr moved and Commissioner Reed seconded approval of the September 6, 2012 meeting minutes. The motion passed 7-0 [Commissioner Lye arrived late].

Briefing on the Rock Creek Watershed Assessment

Lise Soukup presented an overview of the draft assessment developed by URS Inc. and requested comments from Commissioners by October 22, 2012. The Commission is also requested to endorse the work at its next meeting on November 1, 2012. Ms. Soukup provided each of the Commissioners with a cd of the report and its 5 appendices. She also provided context for the assessment and described its scope and purpose. Rock Creek was last assessed in 2000 and that effort primarily focused on potential CIP stormwater retrofits. This report provides more detail on the health of the water body and the pollution threats it faces. A briefing for the Mayor and Council is scheduled for November 26, 2012.

September 22 Community Day at the Universities at Shady Grove

The Environment Commission discussed its experience related to participation in *Community Day* at the Universities at Shady Grove. While there was consensus that the event was well planned and executed, there was concern that it was not well attended by Rockville residents and may not be a good investment of time in the future unless it is promoted more heavily in Rockville. Commissioners Becker, Dighe, Hosmer, Kravitz, and Palakovich Carr participated in the event.

Tree Removal at Town Square

Mark Charles summarized the events leading to the removal of 4 street trees in the vicinity of Dawson's Market. The trees were replaced with a hedge – all without City approval. The management company (FRIT) is being cited for site plan/special use permit and tree protection ordinance violations.

Environmental Excellence Awards

Commissioner Becker led a short discussion about the need to prepare and present a draft proposal for “updating the awards criteria, and the nomination and approval processes.”

Stormwater Ordinance Amendments

The Commission was briefed on the proposed amendments to the City Stormwater Ordinance (City Code Chapter 19) at its September meeting. Commissioner Palakovich Carr moved and Commissioner Reed seconded a motion to endorse these amendments to the Mayor and Council and initiate the public comment period. The motion was approved 7-0. The amendments are scheduled to be *introduced* by the Mayor and Council on October 8, 2012. A *public hearing* is scheduled for November 19, *discussion and instructions* on December 10, and *final adoption* on January 14, 2013.

Hometown Holidays 2013

There was general consensus that the Commission will once again participate in Rockville’s *Hometown Holidays* (HTH) celebration. Since the parking area across from the theater will be under construction, the exact configuration of HTH is still in flux. However, the Commission is interested in using the watershed and rainbarrel demonstrations and would like to power the booth via solar energy. Commissioner Becker will inquire re the interest of the vendor that supplied last years’ array.

Multi-City Commission Meeting

The meeting is scheduled for October 18 at 7:30 pm at the College Park City Hall, 4500 Knox Road. Commissioners Clark Reed and Lea Rosenbohm plan to attend. They will discuss the Hometown Holidays outreach effort and one activity from each Committee during the 3 – 5 minute City presentation. No additional staff materials are needed. There was consensus among the Commission to offer to host the next (spring) meeting in mid-April 2013.

Committee Reports

Watershed: Commissioner Palakovich Carr gave the Committee report.

- The Committee has scheduled the next stream cleanup for Maryvale Creek for Saturday October 27 from 10:30 to 12:00. This date coincides with Montgomery County’s Community Service Day. Meet at the picnic area on Old First Street.
- The Committee would like to make up several real estate type signs promoting future Maryvale stream clean up events. Commissioner Cardon has researched the cost and believes ten (10) signs could be purchased for \$200. Commissioner Cardon moved and Commissioner Kravitz seconded a motion to spend up to \$200 for these signs. The motion was approved 7-0-0.

Energy: There was no September meeting.

Outreach: There was no September meeting. However, Commissioner Kravitz reminded the Commissioners that her Committee requires additional members. Commissioner Dighe agreed to participate on the Committee. A brief discussion ensued re soliciting additional volunteers. It was suggested that the Committee approach students studying public information and communications topics, and current or future event planners.

New Commission Chair

The Commission took nominations from the floor. Commissioners Kravitz and Reed were nominated. Each made a brief statement to the Commission on their interests and reasons for wanting to serve as chair and took questions. Both nominees then left the meeting while the remainder of the Commission debated their relative strengths. Commissioner Clark Reed was identified as the preferred choice at this time. His name will be forwarded to the Mayor for consideration by the Council.

Environmental Management Staff Report

- Mark Charles noted that Barbara Matthews has started as the new City Manager. The Commission expressed interest in inviting her to an upcoming meeting in November or December.
- Mr. Charles indicated that Audra Lew has accepted a temporary position as the City's sediment and erosion control inspector. Audra has previously worked for Environmental Management and the Croydon Creek Nature Center and served on the Environment Commission (as a student member in 2006 and 2007).
- The City is receiving two sustainability awards: The *Sustainable Maryland Certified* (second community in the State to be certified) award was presented on October 4 at the Maryland Municipal League meeting in Hagerstown, Maryland. The *Bethesda Magazine Sustainable Community* award will be presented at a Bethesda Green Gala on October 11 at the Tower Oaks Building in Rockville.
- U.S. EPA released its update to the Green Power Community Challenge and Rockville is ranked 12th in the nation for its use of green power.
- Mr. Charles noted that the City Calendar function has been improved and is easy to post all Commission and staff public meetings, workshops, lectures and other activities.

Announcements

- The new City Police Station is being dedicated on Saturday, October 20 at 10:00 am
- The *Rockville Summit* is scheduled for Saturday, November 3 from 9:00-11:30 at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm by unanimous acclamation.

Next Commission Meeting

The next Commission meeting is *tentatively* scheduled for **Thursday, November 1, 2012 at 7:30 pm** in the **Diamondback Conference Room** of the **Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland, 20850**. The public is invited to attend.